

# MASSACHUSETTS PLOUGHMAN



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## The Poor's Corner.

CROCUS.

O dear, delightful sound  
Of the drops that to the ground  
From the eaves delightful run  
In the February sun!  
Drip, drip, drip, that siste and slip  
For the winter's bright vix.

Till they melt the earth's snows  
On the garden bed below.

"Bless me! what is all this drumming?"

Cries the housewife, "I am come."

From the house comes the ring and load,

For the winter cross not proved;

But a little sleep still

With the winter's lingering chill.

Never mind! "The time to wake,

Through the frosty doors do we go."

The frosty doors done as said,

Up she starts her golden head,

Looks about with radiant eyes

In a kind of sij surprise,

Tris to say in accents early,

"What is this? a little early?"

But she lights with such a smile

All the darkness place the while,

Every heart begins to stir

Joyfully at the sight of her;

Every creature grows more gay

Looking in her eyes.

She is here! "Welcome, dear!

Fresh smile of the hopeful year!

First bright print of Spring's light foot,

Golden crocus, welcome, sweet!"

And she smiles, looking up,

From her richly glowing cap.

All the world is in high

Overhead against the sky:

"Now I've come, O sparkling drops,

All your clattering, patterning stope,

And I wish you'd come, I have

Tris to the blithe, the blithe, the blithe!

They hammered at the door below

Till you wakened me below

With your one incessant tune.

I'm not here a bit too soon!"

- Celia Thaxter, in St. Nicholas for March.

Ladies' Department.

CAUGHT IN A GALE.

In the year 1846 I made a voyage to China by the way of Cape Horn. I had command of the good ship "Avalon," which was bound with a cargo of cotton to San Francisco. We were getting around the south ern capes of America, but when we entered the Pacific, we found the weather good, and for some time we were along the coast without a sight of land or birds.

I stopped at Valparaiso, where I remained eight days, and then I set sail for New Zealand, on business connected with the United States Christian Mission.

For a month I was getting along well, but a fair wind, but on the evening of the twelfth we had indications of a storm.

I had the sail shortened, taking in the top-gallant and flying jib.

About six o'clock in the evening the wind came round from the eastward and blew a gale, and by midnight I was forced to lay to. In the morning when the sun rose it was still in the gale, and I began to fluster myself that we were nearly rid of the storm.

At noon I was able to get the sun, and I found my position to be latitude 30° 45' west, longitude 32° 15' min. south, and the wind had now become strong and battering, but with a heavy sea. Towards the middle of the afternoon, my mate, who was as anxious as I was, said to me, "I think that myself, named Hunter, came to me and asked me what I thought of the weather."

"It's not settled yet, by any means," I replied.

"No," said he, emphatically; "it's not the word of it. We are going to have a stinger."

"I think we shall have more gales," I responded, "for it is now evident enough that the storm is not wholly passed."

"Ay—and we shall catch it this time more southerly. I tell ye, captain, we've got to stand out to sea, and we're beyond the place where we're been before."

"So have I," I replied, several times; but I never happened to get caught in a storm of any magnitude in the Pacific yet."

"Out—I have a shiver in me," said Mr. Hunter, with a shudder. "By my soul, they can get up some great blows here when they try. I rode out here in '29, in an old ship, and the wind had now become strong and battering, but with a heavy sea. Towards the middle of the afternoon, my mate, who was as anxious as I was, said to me, "I think that myself, named Hunter, came to me and asked me what I thought of the weather."

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